

Strengthening Our Friendship With The Muslim Community Worldwide

President Bush Announces He Will Appoint A Special Envoy To The Organization Of The Islamic Conference

Today, President Bush participated in the Rededication Of The Islamic Center Of Washington, in Washington, D.C. President Dwight D. Eisenhower attended the Dedication Ceremony of the Islamic Center of Washington on June 28, 1957, to demonstrate America's respect for the Islamic faith. To underscore this respect for Muslims everywhere, President Bush visited the Islamic Center of Washington six days after the 9/11 attacks to denounce any prejudice against Muslim-Americans.

- **The President Announced He Will Appoint A Special Envoy To The Organization Of The Islamic Conference (OIC).** The OIC is an inter-governmental organization that strengthens political, economic, social, cultural, and scientific cooperation among its 57 member states.
 - **The President's Announcement Reaffirms The United States Government's Outreach To Muslim Communities Based On Mutual Respect And Understanding.** This is the first time in history that a president has made such an appointment to the OIC.
 - **The Special Envoy Will Represent America's Views And Values And Work To Demonstrate To The Wider Islamic World Our Interest In Respectful Dialogue And Continued Friendship.** The Envoy will maintain formal contact with the OIC Secretariat, the Secretary General, the chairing country, plus other member countries, to follow OIC affairs and activities, understand the views of OIC members and leaders, seek ways for the U.S. and the OIC to cooperate, and seek to promote U.S. views on important policy matters that may come before the OIC.

Today, We Have An Opportunity To Help The Forces Of Moderation Win The Great Struggle Against Extremism. In the Middle East, we have seen the rise of a group of extremists who seek to use religion as a path to power and a means of domination.

- **Extremists Falsely Claim That America Is At War With The Muslim People And The Muslim Faith, When In Fact It Is These Radicals Who Are Islam's True Enemy.** They have staged spectacular attacks on Muslim holy sites to divide Muslims and make them fight one another, and they have killed more Muslims than they have killed people of any other faith.
- **The President Has Committed His Administration To Helping People Fight Off Terrorism And Find Their Own Paths To Prosperity And Peace.** The efforts underway in Afghanistan and Iraq are central to this struggle, but the struggle will not end there. The stirrings of a democratic future have already been seen in other parts of the Middle East, though they may take time to be realized.
- **Men And Women Of Conscience Have A Duty To Speak Out And Condemn The Murderous Movement Of Extremists – And In This Effort, Moderate Muslim Leaders Have The Most Powerful And Influential Voice.** America admires and thanks those Muslims who have denounced what the OIC Secretary General called "radical fringe elements who pretend that they act in the name of Islam," and we must encourage more Muslim leaders to add their voices.